Claims

What is claimed is:

    1. A method for use in an information processing system for generating a recommendation at a processing device, the method comprising the steps of:

        receiving an input and one or more limiting factors in a recommender system, at least a subset of the one or more limiting factors being selectable by a user of the device; and

        generating an output recommendation based at least in part on the input and a stored profile associated with the device, a characteristic of the generating step being configured by the recommender system in accordance with the one or more limiting factors.

    2. The method of claim 1 further including the step of generating a ripeness indicator associated with the output recommendation, the ripeness indicator being indicative of the characteristic of the generating step as configured in accordance with the one or more limiting factors.

    3. The method of claim 2 wherein the ripeness indicator comprises a visual indicator having at least a first state corresponding to a first color and a second state corresponding to a second color.

    4. The method of claim 2 wherein the ripeness indicator comprises an audible indicator.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein at least a subset of the one or more limiting factors are selectable via a user interface of the processing device.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the limiting factor comprises a specified limit on an amount of time that may be spent by the recommender system in generating the output recommendation.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the limiting factor comprises a specified limit on an amount of power consumption utilized in conjunction with generating the output recommendation.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the limiting factor comprises a specified limit on a quality measure associated with the output recommendation.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein a given limiting factor is selectable by the user as one of a plurality of points along a scale from a low level of the limiting factor to a high level of the limiting factor.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the processing device is configured for presentation of the output recommendation in a visually-perceptible manner on a display of the device.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the processing device is configured for presentation of the output recommendation in an

audibly-perceptible manner using a speaker associated with the device.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the processing device comprises at least one of a desktop or portable personal computer, a personal digital assistant, a wireless telephone and a set top box.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the one or more limiting factors are stored as part of the profile.

14. An apparatus for use in generating a recommendation in a processing device of an information processing system, the apparatus comprising:

a memory for storing a profile associated with the device; and

a processor coupled to the memory, the processor being operative to process an input and one or more limiting factors in an implementation of a recommender system, at least a subset of the one or more limiting factors being selectable by a user of the device, and to generate an output recommendation based at least in part on the input and the stored profile associated with the device, a characteristic of the recommendation generation operation being configured by the recommender system in accordance with the one or more limiting factors.

15. An article of manufacture comprising a machine-readable storage medium containing one or more software programs for use in

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generating a recommendation in a processing device of an information processing system, wherein the one or more software programs when executed implement the steps of:

      receiving an input and one or more limiting factors in a

5   recommender system, at least a subset of the one or more limiting factors being selectable by a user of the device; and

      generating an output recommendation based at least in part on the input and a stored profile associated with the device, a characteristic of the generating step being configured by the

10   recommender system in accordance with the one or more limiting factors.